

Mexborough Doncaster Road Junior School

Doncaster Road, Mexborough, South Yorkshire, S64 0LU

Inspection dates 6–7 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and governing body set a clear direction for the school's work and are driving forward school improvement.
- Most pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, and those who attract extra funding through the pupil premium, make good progress from their starting points and achieve well.
- Almost all parents hold the school in high regard.
- The successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's work and relationships are strong at all levels.
- There is much good teaching and a determined drive to make it better. The best teaching sees learning moving on rapidly because work is carefully matched to pupils' precise needs.
- Pupils play their part in the successes of the school through their good behaviour and a readiness to learn.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is still not consistently good, especially in mathematics, where there are often missed opportunities to challenge the most-able pupils. Marking does not always explain to pupils how to improve their work and pupils do not always have clear steps to success to help them make even better progress.
- The improving curriculum does not yet provide enough opportunities for pupils to engage in practical tasks and develop important skills across different subjects and topics. Nor is the development of literacy and numeracy through topic work recorded to help accelerate pupils' progress.
- Not enough attention is given to developing pupils' understanding of the diverse nature of British society.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector visited nine lessons taught by five teachers, two of which were joint observations carried out with the headteacher.
- He held meetings with governors, senior leaders, other staff and pupils.
- The inspector listened to three pupils in Year 3 and three pupils in Year 6 read.
- The inspector observed pupils' work in all classes. He studied a range of documents including: the school improvement plan; the school's own evaluation of its work; attendance information; records of the monitoring of lessons undertaken by the headteacher and other staff; documentation relating to pupils' safety and equality; planning documents and the school's analysis of data on pupils' progress.
- He took account of the responses from a recent questionnaire sent out by the school based on the questions asked on Parent View, as there were too few responses recorded from Parent View.

Inspection team

Derek Pattinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Mexborough, Doncaster Road Junior School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below what is typical nationally.
- There are no pupils at present who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action and school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are average.
- Fewer pupils than in other primary schools join or leave outside the usual times.
- The school meets the government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection and following the retirement of the previous headteacher in 2012, the former deputy headteacher has been promoted to headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By September 2014, eliminate teaching that requires improvement and ensure that most of the good teaching becomes outstanding in order to drive forward pupils' achievement, especially for more-able pupils and in mathematics by:
 - seeking out and implementing outstanding practice
 - checking that activities, especially for more-able pupils, are always challenging
 - injecting greater pace into some lessons and reducing the amount of 'teacher talk' so that pupils have as much time as possible to work independently
 - giving pupils clear steps to success and more opportunities to talk about their learning
 - checking that marking always gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve and take the steps needed to reach their targets.
- Build on the good work already started to improve the curriculum to help bring learning alive by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to solve problems and engage in practical tasks
 - making further links between subjects to help develop important skills
 - introducing a system of recording the development of key skills through topic work.
- Increase pupils' understanding of the diverse nature of British society.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils are achieving well from a little below average starting points when they arrive into Year 3. Pupils reach at least average standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave and have done so for five years. However, the most recent national test results show that English and mathematics results improved on the previous year.
- Progress is good because of the mostly good teaching. Many groups, such as pupils who are disabled and have special educational needs and those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium are making better than expected progress in English and mathematics. Efforts to accelerate the progress of most groups have been successful.
- Most pupils make good gains in learning to read with fluency, accuracy and understanding. This is because the promotion of reading and writing is high profile in the school's work. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their reading books and about their favourite authors. They increasingly write for different purposes and in different subjects.
- Leaders place significant emphasis on regular checking on how pupils are doing so that individual needs are identified early. As a result, they provide a variety of successful support arrangements, often using skilled teaching assistants, when pupils are at risk of falling behind. This work demonstrates that the school is successfully promoting equality of opportunities for success. Furthermore, the school's own checking arrangements show that grouping pupils by ability for English and mathematics has been successful in accelerating progress. The rigorous approach to checking also enables leaders to set challenging targets to help drive up standards further.
- Nevertheless, sometimes missed opportunities to challenge the most-able pupils restrict their potential to make even faster progress. This was especially the case in mathematics where evidence indicates that occasionally work is not at the right level of challenge for them.

The quality of teaching is good

- A wide range of inspection evidence showed teaching to be securely good. Many more positive features were seen than negative features. However, there is no outstanding teaching and a minority requires improvement.
- Typical of the most effective teaching was a mathematics lesson on fractions, in which a group of less-able pupils develop an understanding of halves and quarters. In this lesson, and in another in which pupils used role play to explore emotions, pupils made good progress because work was carefully matched to their needs. Time is used well, the teacher's subject knowledge is secure and carefully chosen questions help all pupils to move forward.
- Relationships at all levels are good and teachers give pupils much encouragement. This helps to ensure that pupils are keen to learn; there is a strong working atmosphere and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted.
- Teaching assistants ensure that pupils with special educational needs, and those who receive additional funding through the pupil premium, make similarly good progress to other pupils.
- A minority of teaching requires improvement. For example, in a lesson where pupils were learning to use division to find fractions of numbers, the teacher's presentation was not at the right level to build effectively on previous learning and pupils had too little time to work independently. As a result, pupils, especially the more-able, did not make best possible progress. Occasionally, pupils do not have clear steps to success or time to talk about their learning.
- Marking does not always help pupils to improve. They do not always receive the advice they need so that they can make headway and measure the progress they make.
- The teaching of reading and writing, boosted by successful recent initiatives, is effective in ensuring that pupils read and write with increasing confidence. Writing, linked to work on both

'water' and 'Conisborough Castle', provides evidence of its high profile. Pupils talk confidently and enthusiastically about the books they read.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils, including those who may be vulnerable due to their circumstances, enjoy school, with most attending regularly and arriving on time. Attendance is broadly average. The school does much to promote it, seeking constantly to boost attendance levels, such as by rewarding 100% attendance.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well in lessons and when taught in small groups. They say that adults help them to learn and respond to their suggestions.
- The school's systems for managing pupils' behaviour are effective; pupils behave well and value the praise and reward they receive. Occasional examples of inappropriate behaviour, such as, pupils 'falling out' in the playground, are always dealt with effectively.
- Behaviour in lessons is almost always good. In the best lessons, such as in a Year 4 and 5 lesson where pupils were investigating the hardness of different rocks, pupils were excited and involved in their learning. Indeed, inappropriate behaviour in the classroom is rare, and is never allowed to impinge on learning.
- Parents who responded to a recent questionnaire sent out by the school based on questions posed on Parent View are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They confirm that behaviour is good and that the school deals with rare instances of bullying well.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents agree. Pupils have a good awareness of safety issues, such as of the dangers posed by the use of the internet. They know what to do in an emergency.
- Assemblies reinforce the importance of working together, such as considering issues of what makes a good friend, and contribute well to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher knows what are the school's strengths and weaknesses. Key strengths of the leadership include the ability to set a clear and rigorous agenda for improvement, to sustain high morale and to help teachers develop their skills. He has successfully instilled in staff a drive to improve the school and pupils' achievement.
- All are fully involved in helping to meet agreed priorities, ensuring a shared commitment for school improvement. Although subject leadership roles are continuing to develop, subject leaders check the provision and standards in their subjects regularly. As a result, they know what works well and what needs improving.
- The school's procedures for ensuring pupils' safety are thorough. Procedures for checking pupils' progress are rigorous. As a result, pupils starting to fall behind are immediately given extra help.
- Leaders assess the quality of teaching in lessons often and place an increasingly strong emphasis on how pupils learn. Arrangements for managing teachers' work have clearly measurable targets so that teachers are held to account for the progress their pupils make.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils and is being developed to make it more interesting. However, the development of links between subjects to solve problems and engage in practical tasks, to add relevance and excitement, is in its early stages. Systems have not yet been developed to record pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy while pursuing other subjects. There are also missed opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of the increasingly diverse nature of British society. However, discrimination in any form is not tolerated.
- The local authority provides occasional support and good advice, which is appreciated by leaders.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body increasingly challenges and supports the school well and holds the school strongly to account for standards and achievement. It clearly understands where the school's priorities lie and what further action needs to be taken to build upon the school's good progress. Statutory duties are fulfilled, and financial management is secure. Governors ensure that the use of the pupil premium funding, for example, has been to good effect. Safeguarding policies and procedures are fully understood, met and regularly reviewed.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106682
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	403023

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	K Barron
Headteacher	B Hayles
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2007
Telephone number	01709 583295
Fax number	01709 570614
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